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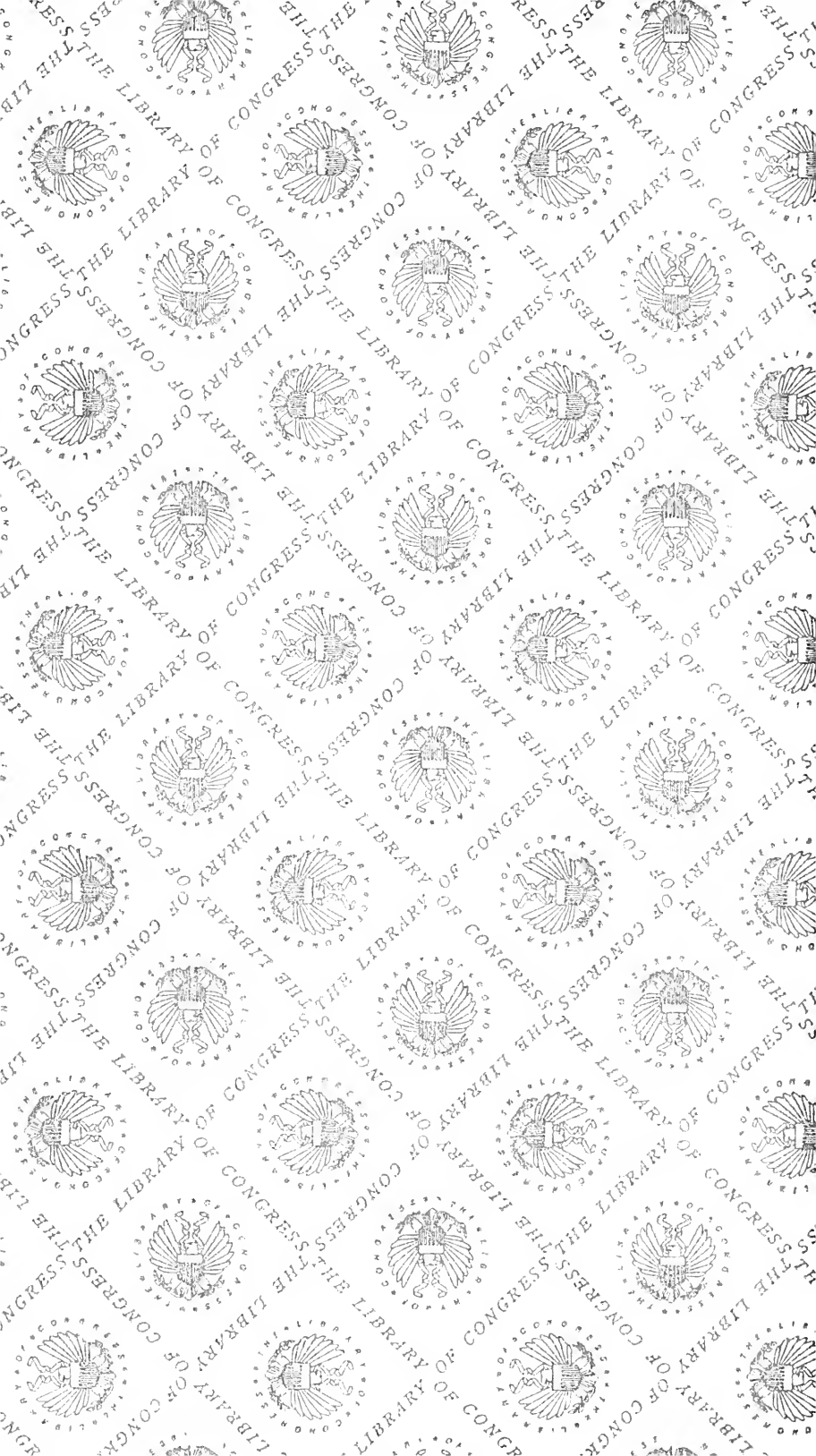
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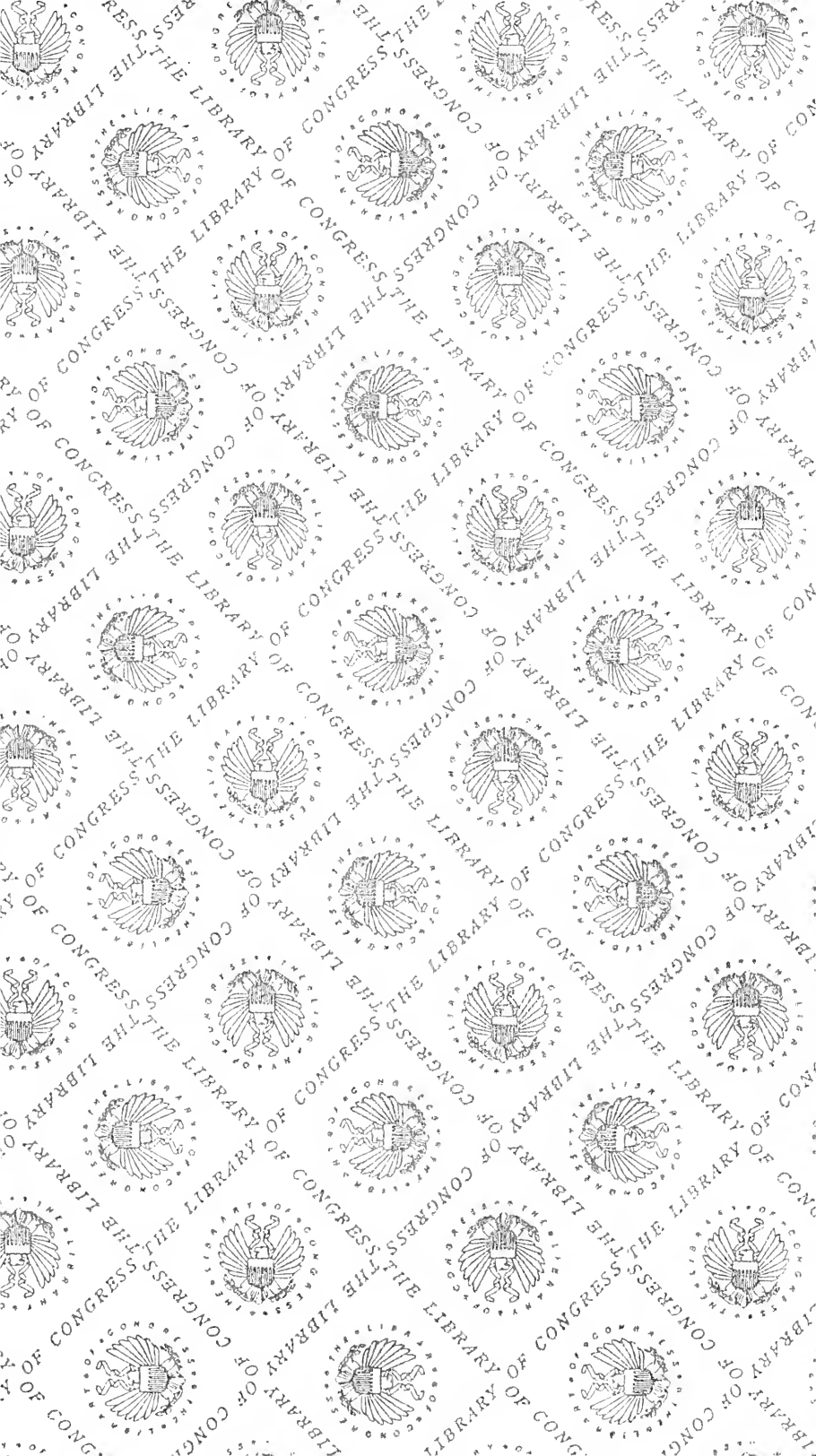
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SPEECH

OF

MR. R. JOHNSON, OF MARYLAND,

ON THE

TEN REGIMENT BILL.

DELIVERED IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES, JANUARY 10 AND 11, 1848.

Mr. JOHNSON, of Maryland, said: My purpose, Mr. President, in now addressing the Senate, is to give my opinion upon certain points connected with the present war, which it seems to be conceded may be properly discussed upon the present bill.

They are these—

FIRST. Is the war a just and honorable one, or is it unjust and dishonorable.

SECOND. Has it been heretofore properly prosecuted.

THIRD. How should it hereafter be prosecuted.

FOURTH. What end, consistently with the good name of the nation, should be attained by it.

Mr. President—Upon each of these propositions I propose to present my views with the frankness and freedom which become a Senator, and at the same time with the deference which I sincerely feel for the opinions of those upon both sides of the chamber with whom I shall be found to differ.

Nothing, sir, is more annoying to me than to refer at any time to any thing personal to myself, and it is especially so, to do it in the presence in which I stand. But there may be circumstances which render it a duty. I feel myself in that condition, and I therefore ask the kind indulgence of yourself and the Senate to say a word or two of a personal character.

To those who know me, Mr. President, it is, I am sure, unnecessary to disclaim that I am actuated on this occasion, neither in what I shall say or do, by any other motive than the single motive of duty to my country. If I could be mad enough to desire any other political post of honor than the one which I now hold (sufficient one would think, to satisfy the cravings of any ambition,) I hope I know myself well enough to be able to say with truth, that I should scorn to obtain it by pandering to popular passion or official power. But, sir, I am proud to state, that I have no such desire—that there is no office in the gift of the present Executive which I would accept, and none in the power of the people to give that I would take. In the school of political ethics in which I have been taught, I have imbibed as my first and last lesson, the duty to do what you believe to be right, and confidently abide the result. Be it the approbation of your fellow men, or not, you have then the approbation of your own conscience, transcending, infinitely transcending in true value, any reward that can flow from human source.

As to popularity, sir, I estimate it as nothing, if it is sought after. Its real worth is when it follows good ends, accomplished by good means. It becomes disgrace when catered for.

I would not avow any political opinion, which I did not sincerely entertain, nor conceal one which I did entertain, to win any honor which my countrymen could bestow. Honor so won, if I was capable of so winning it, would be to me but hourly abasement.

Now, I need not say that I came into this body differing with the administration upon almost every subject of our public civil policy. This difference, decided as it was in the beginning, so far from having been diminished, has been but more

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and more strengthened and confirmed. I believe they misapprehend the true policy of the country, and lamentably err upon great and vital points of constitutional power. I may be mistaken, but I believe as sincerely as I believe in my own existence, that the day will come, and is rapidly coming, when this will be seen to be the general opinion of the people, and that until then the country will be deprived of many a blessing which the constitution was intended to bestow. But, sir, new questions have arisen, and are now agitating the nation. We are at war, and upon one of the questions growing out of it, I find myself differing perhaps with most of the Senators on this side of the chamber, (not I hope with all,) with whom it is my pride and pleasure generally to agree. I need not say, Mr. President, to you or to them, that this difference exists, if it does exist, because I am unable from a sense of duty to have it otherwise. Party ties, party prepossessions, party associations, strong as they ever are and should be, can never be sufficiently strong to make an honorable man violate what he feels to be his duty to his country; and when in that duty is involved his country's reputation, they should be and are weaker than the spider's web.

Nor upon this occasion do I feel any other concern than that which the mere fact of difference creates, because I know so well the Senators who are around me, that whatever regret they may feel that our opinions are not upon all points identical, I should cease to have, what I am sure I now have, their respect and esteem, if I surrendered my own judgment, and suffered with my own conscience upon a measure vital in that judgment to the true fame of our common country. We differ, sir, but we differ as friends. We differ, sir, but we differ as patriots. We have alike the true honor of the country at heart—we are only not agreed perhaps as to what that true honor demands.

Sir, he libels them, and libels me, who doubts our high and patriotic purposes. He violates the decorum of private life, and the decencies of official relation, where it exists, who imputes that we are capable, under any state of things, or for any purposes, of taking sides with the enemies of our country. We aim alike at her honor—we disagree, if we do disagree, as to the true mode of vindicating and maintaining it. Mr. President, all of the good and liberal of my countrymen will, I have no doubt, when they shall have seen what I am about to say, do me the justice to believe that my motives are pure and patriotic. There may be, and perhaps are, mere followers of the party camp, whose hope it is to feed on the spoils of the contest, who may profess to doubt it; but none such do I drop a syllable to satisfy. Bred in the corruption of the motto of the political free-booter, that the spoils belong to the victor—fighting not for principle, but for plunder, they are as feculant as their motto, and beneath the notice of honest men. Only, indeed, to be shunned as you would shun any loathsome toad that might be in your pathway. I proceed now with the discussion.

Is the war just and honorable or not?

I think it is just and honorable, and I hope for the good name of my country, that such will be the judgment of Christendom. Sir, I wish to be understood. I am not in this place inquiring into the conduct of the Executive, into its prudence, or its constitutionality. My single proposition now is, that as *between the United States and Mexico*, the former had just cause of war on the 13th May, 1846, when the war act of that date was passed, and that on that day war in fact existed by means of the unjust and illegal act of Mexico. Sir, I repeat, before going further, that I sincerely trust, as I love the fair fame of my countrymen, that I may be able to make this plain. Sir, I should bow in deep and heart-felt mortification for that fame if I did not believe it to be plain. I would not have it even to be involved in the slightest obscurity or doubt, from the dread of the judgment which the civilized world would then be compelled to pass upon us. We live in an age when nations, as individuals, lose their power and usefulness, and sink into degradation, if they perpetrate acts of wrong and injustice. We are, thank God, surrounded by a moral atmosphere as necessary to healthful national existence as the atmosphere we breathe is necessary to individual life. If we dis-

card it, if we sink below it, if we substitute for it that which is inseparable from violence and injustice, the punishment is at hand. Decay begins, and progresses, until we are involved in hopeless ruin.

National character, sir, is national power, and the purer, the more elevated, the more spotless that character, the greater the power. I trust, therefore, in God, that I am right in the opinion that this war is, upon our part, just and honorable. If not, if not clearly just and honorable, then will we be pronounced by the judgment of the world a band of murderers. No other sentence can then be passed upon us. If we are right, we are worthy descendants of sires who knew no moral blemish, who estimated the national honor above all price. If we are wrong, we have disgraced the inheritance of freedom they have left us, brought dishonor upon our land, and aimed a fatal blow at constitutional freedom itself.

Mr. President, if I speak strongly, it is because I feel strongly. I wish to give offence to none, I take no offence if others hold a different opinion. I am here to justify my own before the Senate and the country, and I mean to do it with the freedom that belongs to each of us.

Mr. President, I have an instinctive repugnance to believe my country wrong in any war in which she can engage, and I rejoice that in this instance my feelings and my judgment are one. I now proceed with the attempt to maintain that judgment. I have not time, sir, nor health to state all the facts which our difficulties with Mexico have developed applicable to this question. Nor if I had, should I deem it necessary to trespass so much upon the time of this body. My purpose is to refer only to such as I am sure cannot be successfully denied, and which are of themselves, in my opinion, conclusive of the controversy.

In 1834, the Mexican Congress passed a decree, requiring all citizens to surrender to the Government their arms. The legislature of Coahuila and Texas, by decree, remonstrated against it and against other acts repealing the constitution of Mexico of '24, by which they had changed the Government from a Federal to a Central one.

For this General Cos, under the order of Santa Anna, at the head of his army, broke up the legislature of Coahuila and Texas, arrested all the officers of the Government, marched over the Rio Grande, and established his headquarters at San Antonio, leaving a garrison at Lipautitlan on the Nueces, and one at Goliad. The Texans then commenced the revolution, and in 1836 retook Goliad, Lipautitlan, and San Antonio.

The boundaries of Coahuila and Texas, as these departments were laid off into one State by the constitution of '24, were the Nueces, running for upward of one hundred miles up that stream, and then by a line across from that point to the Rio Grande. The territory below that line, between the Nueces and the Rio Grande, was a part of the State of Tamaulipas. The territory above that point on the Rio Grande, was divided between Coahuila and Texas, by the river; that is to say, the Texan boundary, as between herself and Coahuila, established by the constitution of 1824, was the Rio Grande running north-easterly from the point where the line I have stated, from the Nueces to the Rio Grande, struck the latter. Tamaulipas granted to various individuals, by what were called colony-grants, under which many settlements were made, much of the land belonging to her situated between the Nueces and the Rio Grande. These colonists, or the greater portion of them, so entitled to this portion of the territory, *joined in the Texas Revolution, and were represented in the convention of Texas, which subsequently declared the independence of that Republic.* The day after the battle of San Jacinto, 31st April, '36, Santa Anna surrendered as a prisoner. In about six weeks afterwards he entered into a treaty with the Government of Texas, acknowledging the Rio Grande as its southwestern boundary, upon condition that General Felixola, then at the head of five thousand troops, being all that were left to the centralists to maintain their power, should be permitted to retire west of the river, and that he, himself, should be

released. These conditions were complied with, Felisolea being permitted to retire with all of his force to the west of the river, and Santa Anna, in October afterwards, being released. The treaty contained, also, various stipulations about the release of prisoners and the surrender of property. General Rusk (the honorable Senator from Texas now before me, and who will pardon me for referring to him by name, it being impossible to avoid it because of its inseparable connection with the short but glorious history of his country's revolution,) then at the head of the Texan forces, and under the order of the Texan Government, transmitted a copy of the treaty to General Felisolea, who recognized it, and at once complied with all the obligations it imposed upon him.

In 1836, 19th December, the Texan Congress passed a law describing the Rio Grande as their southwestern boundary. After this, Felisolea was superseded in command by the appointment of General Urea, who immediately commenced raising an army to re-invade Texas. General Rusk, who was still at the head of the army of Texas, and stationed at the Gaudaloupe, ordered the families between that post and the Rio Grande to retire to his rear, or to remove to the western bank of the river. The most of them did retire to his rear, but many of the Mexicans elected to cross the river, and settle on the opposite side. For the purpose of facilitating the removal of those occupying the country and of watching the movements of the Mexican army, and preparatory to an advance upon Matamoras, he dispatched General Felix Houston with a sufficient force to take possession of Corpus Christi, and that was done. General Houston exercised more authority, between the Nueces and the Rio Grande, than Urea did, who was stationed at Matamoras, with a force of about ten thousand men. At one period Urea crossed the river with the greater part of his command, and encamped a few miles east of the river, but in a very short period he re-crossed to the western side. In this condition things remained until 1843, the Mexicans having no army to the east of the river, and the Texans having a few troops at Corpus Christi and San Antonio. With these troops, however, the Texans frequently made excursions to Lacido, a place upon the Rio Grande, and several times crossed it. The Mexican troops made two incursions, crossing the river both times, coming as far as San Antonio, and upon each occasion were immediately driven back to the west bank. In 1843, also, an armistice was agreed upon, under which the Mexican army was to remain on the west and the Texans on the east side of the river. This armistice was in the same year revoked and the war declared to be renewed. The proclamation of General Wool, who was then in command of the Mexican force, issued by direction of Santa Anna, declared that all Mexicans found within three leagues of the river, would be considered as "favoring the usurpers of that territory," (meaning by the territory, *the whole of Texas*,) be tried by court martial, and capitally punished. There were, during this period, at a post called Lacido, on the east side of the river, some citizens under a military organization, and organized simply with a view of defence against the Indians, mustered only upon such occasions, but claiming to be citizens when Hays or McCullough were there with the Texan Rangers. From the commencement of the revolution in '34, to the independence declared by Texas in '36—from that period to the admission of Texas into our Union in '45—and from '45 up to the present hour, no Mexican document can be found, military or civil—no Mexican officer, military or civil—has ever been known maintaining that the territory lying between the Nueces and the Rio Grande belonged to Mexico by any other title than that which she maintained to the whole territory between the Sabine and the Rio Grande. Under the colony contracts granted by Tamaulipas, heretofore referred to, the settlers, at an election in Texas in '41 or '42 for members of Congress, voted at Corpus Christi, claiming to be citizens of Texas, and their votes were received and recognized by the government. The evidences to the title, too, to the lands so settled upon, including all transfers from the time of the revolution of '34, to the present time, are recorded amongst the land records of Texas. On

the first of March, '45, the alternative resolutions for the admission of Texas into the Union were passed. On the 29th of December, '45, Texas was admitted, and on the same day an act was passed to extend the laws of the United States over the State of Texas. On the 31st December, '45, Texas was constituted a revenue district, and the city of Galveston, the only port of entry, having annexed to it, amongst other ports, as ports of delivery, the port of Corpus Christi, a port on the west side of the Nueces. Under that act a revenue officer of the United States has been appointed for Corpus Christi. On 2d February, '47, Congress, by an act establishing additional postroads in the State of Texas, there were established, amongst others, one from Brasos Santiago *via* Point Isabel to Fort Brown, opposite Matamoras; and one from Corpus Christi to Brazos Santiago, a point south of Point Isabel, near the mouth of the Rio Grande.

Now, as before stated, Texas was annexed under the first of the alternative resolutions of the 1st March, '45.

[The first resolution provides, That Congress doth consent that the territory properly included within, and rightfully belonging to the Republic of Texas, may be erected into a new State, to be called the State of Texas, with a republican form of government, to be adopted by the people of said republic, by deputies in convention assembled, with the consent of the existing government, in order that the same may be admitted as one of the States of this Union.

That the foregoing consent of Congress is given upon the condition that the said State be formed, subject to the adjustment by this Government of all questions of boundary that may arise with other governments; and the constitution thereof, with the proper evidence of its adoption by the people of said Republic of Texas, shall be transmitted to the President of the United States, to be laid before Congress for its final action, on or before the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and forty-six.

The second resolution provides, that if the President of the United States shall, in his judgment and discretion, deem it most advisable, instead of proceeding to submit the first resolution to the Republic of Texas, as an overture on the part of the United States for admission, to negotiate with that republic, then that a State be formed out of the present republic of Texas, with suitable extent and boundaries, and with two representatives in Congress until the next apportionment of representation, shall be admitted into the Union, by virtue of this act, on an equal footing with the existing States, as soon as the terms and conditions of such admission, and the cession of the remaining Texan territory to the United States shall be agreed upon by the government of Texas and the United States; and the sum of \$100,000 is hereby appropriated to defray the expenses of missions and negotiations, to agree upon the terms of said admission and cession, either by treaty to be submitted to the Senate, or by articles to be submitted to the two Houses of Congress, as the President may direct.]

Immediately upon the annexation the Minister of Mexico, General Almonte, demanded his passports, upon the ground that the annexation itself was a state of hostility to Mexico, and from that period to the march of General Taylor from Corpus Christi to the Rio Grande, the frequent efforts of the American Government to terminate the controversy by negotiation failed; and before that march, the Mexican Government were collecting their forces upon the Rio Grande, with the avowed design, not of taking possession only of the territory between the Nueces and the Rio Grande, and conceding to the United States that portion of Texas which lay west of the Nueces, but of disputing with the United States the title to the *whole* of the country between the Rio Grande and the Sabine, and upon the ground *that the whole and every part of that territory was still a portion of Mexico by virtue of her original and paramount title*. Now, Mr. President, the proposition which I seek to maintain is this: that as between the Government of the United States and the Government of Mexico, the former had in this condition of things a perfect right, and the same right for the purpose of repelling the threatened invasion, to march her troops into the territory between the Nueces and the Rio Grande, as into any territory situated between the Sabine and the Nueces. The question is not, whether such a movement of the troops was under all the circumstances judicious and prudent; it is not, whether by a different course an actual conflict might not have been avoided; but whether, as a matter of right—as a matter of self-defence, the United States (not the President) had not, under the law of nations, full and perfect authority and justification to make such a movement.

What, sir, are the clear and indisputable facts? The United States had received the republic of Texas into the Union without antecedently defining her

boundaries and under a constitution which reiterated what had been, as far back as '33, a part of her original constitution as an independent republic—that the Rio Grande, from its source to its mouth, was her southwestern boundary. The United States extended all her laws over the State of Texas, as so admitted. They had assumed actual jurisdiction at Corpus Christi. They knew that there were citizens between the Nueces and the Rio Grande who claimed to be citizens of the State of Texas so admitted. They knew that for nine years the State of Texas had existed as an independent nation.

Who proposed withdrawing Taylor on the 13th May? Who denied then, that we had good right to expel the Mexicans and to invade, for the purpose of avenging the outrage on our flag, any and every part of Mexico? She had refused to negotiate; she had considered annexation as war; she had terminated all diplomatic relations; she had refused to receive our Minister upon a mere quibble of the then President, because he was afraid of his own power, threatened with downfall because it was believed he was willing to negotiate with us at all. She had mustered an army on the Rio Grande with the declared object of invading all Texas, and recovering the whole to her own sovereignty. Her then Government owed its existence to this very determination. She had never maintained any peculiar title to what is now called disputed territory. What, in this state, were the United States to do? Were they bound to remain still and wait the invasion, or were they not authorized to meet the threatened invasion, even upon the admitted territory of the invader? Who doubts, that with nations as with individuals, the right of self-defence gives the right to strike the first blow? To prevent an injury is easier than to repair it. Sir, where is the writer on the law of nations who holds a different opinion? There are some propositions so plain that they admit of no illustration; they furnish their own best illustration, and this is one of them. We had a clear, undeniable right to meet Mexico at the very outermost limits of Texas, and repel her there; or if we deemed it advisable, an equally clear and undeniable right to anticipate her by striking the first blow on her own admitted territory. But it is said that the place of conflict was on Mexican territory. If it was, the argument in our behalf would not be in the least enfeebled. She was there *intending to go further*. She was there to drive our army back to the Sabine. She was there to re-conquer Texas, the whole and every part of Texas, and not to retain a portion only, upon the ground that such portion was not Texas.

But even the fact is not as alleged. Whether this portion of the territory was or was not rightfully a part of Texas was, at least, a matter of dispute. Texas claimed it; Texas, over a portion of it, exercised jurisdiction. Citizens residing on it, claimed to be citizens of that government. Mexico had in vain attempted to recover it. The constitution of Texas included it. The United States had exercised, after the admission of Texas into the Union, sovereignty over part of it—the highest act of sovereignty, the taxing power. She had received Texas into the Union without any other definition of boundary, reserving the right only as between themselves, Texas, and any other power who might question the justice of the boundary, to settle it by negotiation. Without a breach of honor to Texas, the United States could no more have surrendered, without inquiry and negotiation, to an absolute and armed demand, this portion of the territory, than they could have surrendered to such a demand the entire State.

All then that can be said is, that the title of Texas to this part of her territory was open to dispute. Such a dispute is to be settled by two means—by negotiation or by force. If the negotiation was refused, if Mexico elected the other alternative, force, can she complain if we met her with force? But suppose her design was not actual force, but to get possession only of the disputed ground. Had not the United States the same right to take possession, and hold whatever they possessed, until the question of title was decided by negotiation? The very question of title might have been affected by the fact of possession. Mexico might have relied upon it as conclusive of the inability of Texas, and the United

States as their successors, to prevent it, and as demonstrating that her original sovereignty had not been lost by the revolution. This the United States had a right to guard against; their own honor bade them guard against it. If actual possession, by Mexico, could weaken the title of Texas, it was their duty to strengthen it by also taking possession. Tending a question of disputed territory, not actually possessed by either, who ever contended that it was the duty of one of the parties to suffer the other to take possession, and then try the title. No, sir, no lawyer would give such advice. No statesman would so act. Things should, in such a case, be suffered to remain in "*statu quo*." Neither should seek to get advantage of the other. If I am right in this, and Mexico designed taking possession, then she cannot complain if we also took possession; and especially not, if she knew that, notwithstanding such possession, we were willing at any time to negotiate on the question of title.

Sir, it has been said, that to march into the disputed territory is an act of hostility. I concede it. But then to threaten to march—to prepare to march—to muster an army to march, and with the avowed purpose of taking forcible possession and holding, is also an act of hostility. This Mexico did first, and we had then a clear right to anticipate her, upon every principle of the national law, by marching ourselves, and placing ourselves in a condition successfully to meet and repel her. Between nations, as between individuals, aggression may be met by aggression—assault may be met by battery. But it is said revolution gives no title unaccompanied by actual and undisturbed possession and jurisdiction. As a general principle, the proposition is true; but what is actual and undisturbed possession? Does it mean that the revolutionary government is to have a soldier on each foot of her asserted domain? Does it mean that every inhabitant within her territory is to acknowledge and submit to her sovereignty? or does it not only mean, that such government is to have possession, claiming exclusive title to the whole of her asserted bounds, and to possess the power and determination to make that title good by force, against the original sovereignty? I say it means this, and nothing more.

See the result of a different doctrine. We declared our independence in '76; the war continued seven years. Suppose no treaty of peace had been made recognizing our limits, but England had simply retired from the contest in disgust with the struggle, as she might well have done, would not our title at that moment have been as good to every foot of our glorious Thirteen, as it was to the very battle-fields of Saratoga and Yorktown. And yet, how inconsiderable a part of our country was ever trodden by the American soldier or within actual reach of his arm. And yet, how many hearts throughout the contest beat high with true loyalty to England, and were striking, or were burning to strike, for her standard. No, sir, the proposition is not true as it is sometimes understood. It means only the ability to make the usurpation good by force of arms, when the usurper's title is by force of arms assailed. Subject to this test, who can doubt that Texas had the ability to maintain her title to any part of the territory claimed by her between the Nueces and the Rio Grande? Let the facts give the answer. After her declaration of independence, and after she had by force driven the Mexican troops across the latter river, they afterwards returned but twice, and were each time driven back; and from the period of the last incursion, in 1843, no Mexican soldier ever crossed the river, and no civil officer of Mexico ever exercised jurisdiction over that portion of it to which our troops were marched. Texas then claimed the territory—Texas drove Mexico from it—Texas had apparently the power, and certainly the will, to drive her from it whenever she invaded it. If these were the facts, and I appeal to the honorable Senator from Texas for their truth, what doubt is there, that to that part of her constitutional limits she has a perfect title. Sir, a word or two more, and upon this point I have done. What Senator, what American, would now be content to abandon the territory in question, make the Nueces the boundary, and fight only for that boundary? For peace, to put an end to the war, to

spare the further effusion of blood, some might be found, who would, by negotiation, agree to that limit, if Mexico would surrender all title to the rest of Texas. But who is there who would now propose to fall back to the Nueces, and abandon at once the intermediate territory, the very fields of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma to Mexico, and fight her only on the banks of the Nueces? I believe, I hope, for the honor of a common allegiance, that there is not one. I have said that I trusted for the sake of our heretofore stainless character, that the opinion I have thus feebly endeavored to maintain was correct—that the war is, on our part, a just one.

If not, sir, why is it not? It is because, without justification, we invaded Mexican soil. It is because, without justification, we caused Mexican blood to be spilled upon Mexican ground. It is because they were met at their own homes, which we invaded; upon their own fields, dear to them, as love of country is dear—consecrated to them by all the associations which bind man to the soil of his birth, in the holiest of all duties—the defence of home and country; and have, without right, without excuse, without palliation, given them to the sword—slaughtered them by hundreds and thousands, and driven the survivors away. Sir, would not such a tale of wrong, of itself, cover our country with ignominy? But it is not yet half told. What else have we done? We have seized upon it as a pretext for other, and if possible, yet deeper enormities. We have published to the world a falsehood. We have endeavored to conceal the true character of our outrage. We have stated that the contest was of their own seeking—not ours; and upon this degrading perversion, we have pursued them with still more frightful outrages. We at once called into the field 50,000 soldiers—placed the whole naval power of the Government at the disposition of the Executive—entrusted him with ten millions of dollars, and carried on the war thus begun—took possession of their towns, bombarded Monterey—carried it almost by storm, slaughtering men and women by hundreds and thousands. Still the story is not told. The damning dishonor is not yet as dark as the truth. Another Congress assembled—we of the Senate composing it in part. We authorized additional troops to be raised—we placed additional funds in the hands of the President. We hear of an intention to strike outraged Mexico in yet more vital points—we do not arrest it. We suffer the expedition to go on. Before the Mexican blood is yet dry upon the fields of Palo Alto, Resaca de la Palma, Monterey, and Buena Vista, Vera Cruz is bombarded. Her churches fall under the dreadful aim of our mortars—the blood of her women and children run in streams through her before peaceful and happy streets—her almost every thoroughfare is obstructed by the mangled bodies of her slaughtered citizens, until at last, her valor can hold out no longer before the mighty and crushing power of our arms. She surrenders. Yet still our vengeance is not glutted. Innocent, unoffending Mexico has yet more cities to be laid waste or conquered—more hearts to be wrung—more gallant blood to be shed—more women and children to be slaughtered—more agony in every form to suffer. We have not yet had our fill of blood. We march on in our fiendish progress. At Cerro Gordo, Cherubusco, Chapultepec, Molino del Rey, our deeds of slaughter are renewed, and go on with yet more fearful violence. Mexican blood waters every hill and plain. The cries of Mexican agony startle every ear, and still the work goes on. We lay siege to the city of Mexico itself—bombard its peaceful dwellings—make her streets to run with human gore, and slaughter again women and children, until resistance becomes unavailing. We get possession of the Capital, and yet carry on the contest. Sir, can our country have done such deeds? Is she so deeply steeped in crime? Has she no honor left? Are we christian and civilized men, or are we robbers and murderers? I hope she will pardon me the inquiry; and yet if the war was unjust, if it was not provoked, if it was our act, and not the act of Mexico, every human heart, animated by a single human feeling, can but answer in the affirmative.

But no sir, no sir, it is not so. She is high-minded, just, and honorable. She is civilized, not savage. Her citizens are moral and Christian. Those scenes

are, in the eye of God and man, to be justified, because necessary to our honor, and forced upon us in vindication of our violated rights. Mexico is answerable for all these sad and sickening results. The war is just, because she commenced it. It does exist by her act; and, so help me God, but for that conviction, as I reverence truth, and detest falsehood, I would never have voted for the act of 13th May, 1846.

So far I have been considering the justice of the war as between the two belligerents—the United States and Mexico, as nations. But another and a material inquiry presents itself. What, independent of the attack upon our troops on the Rio Grande, the immediate cause of the war, was its remote cause? Upon this point I agree, I believe, and have ever agreed, with my political friends, and, as I think, with hundreds and thousands of our political opponents. That cause is to be found in two measures of the President of the United States. The first, the mode he pursued under the resolutions of the 1st March, '45, to consummate the annexation of Texas to our Union. The second, and the more direct and immediate cause, his order to march our troops to the Rio Grande. Upon both these points I proceed to give my opinion with the frankness which becomes me, and at the same time the decorum which is due to the chief Executive officer of the Government.

First. The mode he adopted of consummating annexation. The resolution of Congress of 1st March presented alternative modes. Under the one, Texas was to be admitted without any precedent definition of her boundaries. Under the other, there was to be such a definition. Sir, I will not stop to inquire into the secret history of that resolution in this body. The treaty which preceded it had been rejected, because it prescribed no other boundary than that which Texas claimed. It was rejected, as appears by the debates in this chamber, because, in the judgment of some Senators on the other side, such claim was untrue and invalid—invalid because a large portion of the territory embraced within the asserted limits was clearly a portion of Mexico. The treaty being rejected, the resolution of the 1st March, 1845, came to the Senate. That, too, was open to the same objection as the treaty. It left the boundary to depend on the claim of Texas. It was impossible for those who thought the treaty was obnoxious on that ground, and on that ground voted against it, to give it their support.

But they did vote for it, after getting it amended, by the insertion of an alternative mode. Sir, how happened it that this change of form reconciled them to the measure? Could it have been for any other reason than because they were satisfied that that alternative would be pursued by the President? Such alternative obviated the objection of an unsettled and unjust boundary. It looked to negotiation as the remedy to avoid all difficulty either with Texas or Mexico. It looked to annexation, without the hazard of a war, and was designed for the pure and patriotic purpose of maintaining the peace and honor of the United States. Now, sir, I do not allege that this was the ground of their support, and still less that they had any assurance from the President upon the subject; but I do allege that I can conceive no other reason for their vote upon the resolution at all in keeping with their characters for high intelligence, firmness of purpose, and patriotism, than that they thought they had an assurance that their mode of annexation would be pursued. Sir, how did it turn out? The ink was hardly dry with which the resolution was recorded, and the name of the President attached to it, before, without going through the form even of a moment's subsequent deliberation, a messenger was despatched to the Government of Texas, inviting her into the Union, under the first alternative—and under the first alternative she came into the Union.

Now, sir, I charge upon the President, that this hasty and ill-advised step was the remote cause of the present war. I charge it upon him, that if he had acted prudently, and cautiously, and wisely, he would have proceeded under the other alternative, and have saved the dreadful effusion of blood the world has been compelled to witness. I charge it upon him that the course which he did pursue was

inconsistent with that uniform policy of his predecessors to avoid, or to seek to avoid, by every possible and honorable means, that direst of all national evils, war.

Sir, it is no defence that Congress authorized the step he did take. They, to be sure, authorized it, but did not command it. They left with him, unwisely, I think—certainly I would not have done it—the discretion to adopt it. But he knew—must have known—that some of the wisest and purest of statesmen predicted that it would end in war; and that some of the wisest and purest of the statesmen belonging to his own political party entertained that opinion. He knew that the majority of the Senate, his constitutional advisers, were firmly of that opinion. He knew they had promptly rejected a treaty upon that very ground, and that alone; and yet, in defiance of all this, he headlong takes the obnoxious step, and the war ensues. The responsibility is upon his head, and heavy and overwhelming is that responsibility.

Sir, annexation of itself would not have been war—Mexico had no right to make it a cause of war. Texas' independence had been too long established and undisturbed to have her absolute right of sovereignty called in question. Acknowledged by the principal powers of the world, all had a right to say, that revolution had ripened into title, and especially had the United States, the neighbor of the new government, that right. Nor do I believe, Mr. President, that Mexico, proud and arrogant as she then was, would have dared, on account of the treaty of annexation, to make war upon the United States. No, sir, it was the manner, not the fact. It was the rashness, and, under the circumstances, in my opinion, the utter rashness of the President's course. I repeat, therefore, my settled conviction, that the President is, on this account, answerable for the war. But, upon the second ground to which I have referred, his liability is even yet more manifest, and without a shadow of justification or excuse. Sir, I need not say that I impute no improper motives to the President. He has, no doubt, I hope, acted under a mistaken sense of duty. But, in my opinion, sir, the order to march our army to the Rio Grande was a flagrant violation of that duty—was ill-advised, reckless, and clearly against the spirit of the Constitution.

Sir, he could not but have known that such a measure was likely to bring on hostilities. He could not but have known that such hostilities would be in the judgment of the nation, war. The war-making power is exclusively vested in Congress, for wise, high, and vital reasons of public policy. No man would be mad enough to repose such a dreaded power in the Executive. The security of freedom and peace demands, that those who are to pay the expenses of war, should alone have the right to declare it. Congress was then in session, why were they not consulted? Was it apprehended that they would not by such a step hazard the peace of the nation? Was it because it was believed that they would resort to every possible effort before taking a step so likely to involve us? Sir, I hope not, I am bound, in respect to the President, to believe not. But, sir, the fact remains. Is there a citizen in the United States of any intelligence who can doubt that Congress never would, in the then condition of things, have suffered, if they could have prevented it, much less ordered, that march.

I charge, therefore, upon the President that as far as the United States and himself are concerned, he is the author of the war. He, and he only; and upon his hands rests the blood which has crimsoned its many glorious battle fields. But this, sir, is a question between the country and the President. *Mexico had no right on that account to assail our flag.* To her it made no difference under what authority of this Government our troops were on the Rio Grande. We had, I repeat, and I hope I have shown, a right to send them there, and her attack upon them was, as regards her and ourselves, war actually begun by her.

Sir, our flag has waved in proud glory over every field of conflict. The nation's heart has beat high with pride and gratitude to the brave spirits who have borne it, for their matchless gallantry and skill. Upon the nation's brow no blush need to be seen. They were not permitted to avoid the horrid strife. Their President, without their knowledge, rashly involved the nation's honor.

That honor was then illegally assailed. They had no choice but to vindicate it. Theirs is all the glory which has been achieved. The President hereafter, when in the retirement of private life, and reviewing the scenes of these bloody conflicts, however it may be now, will take no joy in the remembrance of our triumphs. The voice of conscience will tell him that all the blood of the battle was of his shedding. The tale of its glory, to him, will be lost amidst the agonizing cries of the widows and orphans it has made. Sir, I repeat it, I allege no improper motive to the Executive, but as I believe that I am now addressing you, do I believe that upon the President rests the blood and expenses of the war, and upon him, therefore, I charge them.

I have said all, Mr. President, that I proposed to say upon the part of the subject to which, so far, I have called the attention of the Senate. It is possible, however, that in what I am about to offer to the consideration of the Senate, I shall incidentally refer to it again. I speak next, and in the first place, of the actual conduct of the war under the management of the President of the United States. The war was recognised as existing on the 13th of May, 1846, by the act of Congress of that date. We are now in the month of January, 1848, and to all appearances, the restoration of peace is as far off, and even further, than it seemed to be on the 13th May, 1846. The whole power of the nation, so far as he has deemed it advisable to ask to have that power devolved upon him, has been placed in the hands of the Executive. Not an occasion, although there have been so many and such glorious ones, has presented itself in which the American arms have not been triumphant. And yet there is no peace. My opinion is, and has been throughout, that the reason is to be referred exclusively to the want of vigor with which the war has been prosecuted. We have had an ostentatious and asserted vigor, but we have had nothing else, as far as the President is concerned.

I am very far from imputing—because I am incapable of making a charge which I do not believe to be true—I am very far from imputing, that this want of actual vigor has been intentional on the part of the Executive. So far from it, I believe that he has been deluding himself, from time to time, with the idea that peace was to be obtained without the effusion of blood; a sad delusion—a delusion, sir, which must hereafter constitute a great and overwhelming account of responsibility against him.

I said yesterday, that it was the march of our troops from the Nueces to the Rio Grande, that was, in my opinion, the immediate cause of the war. I say to-day what I have had occasion to say in other places, over and over again—that I believe that that march of itself, if it had been made with a proper force, would not actually have led to such a result. I have no doubt that if, instead of sending the small but gallant band—the heroes of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma—to the Rio Grande, he had sent from 5,000 to 8,000 men, not a drop of blood would have been shed, and no Mexican ever have ventured to have trodden the soil on this side of the river in hostile attitude. But sir, the war commenced, was recognised, and 50,000 troops, with an unlimited amount of treasure, were freely placed at the disposal of the Executive, together with an implied promise, such as to give the President the assurance, (if such were needed,) that this unlimited amount could, if the expression may be excused, be made still more unlimited. And yet what has he done? Instead of calling out twenty or thirty, or forty, or fifty thousand men, as he was authorized to do by the act of the 13th of May, 1846, he, and the officer at the head of the War Department, called them out by dribblets—and announcing to the country from time to time, that they had a sufficient force in the field to conquer a peace. What has been the consequence? That which every man of intelligence who speaks as he thinks must acknowledge—that great and mighty and extraordinary as have been the triumphs of the American arms, they have hardly furnished us anything but the glory attending them. They have, to be sure, illustrated the American character for valor and military skill; but they have served no other purpose. And why, Mr. President? Because each struggle has been at such fearful odds, that the gallant officer in command has been unable to follow it up, or profit by the result.

Look at the history of the campaign on the Rio Grande. General Taylor, who, with a few thousand men, marched to Monterey, and succeeded, after a dread and fearful conflict, in carrying that almost impregnable fortified town, was so far crippled that he was unable to hold even the prisoners that he might take. What happened afterwards? The plan of the campaign is changed, some new light dawns upon the mind of the Executive, and Mexico is to be stricken in a different part. There is a point still more vital to be assailed—a point still more certain, if assailed, to lead to the restoration of peace, and to the vindication of our outraged rights. What is done? Gen. Taylor is stripped of what was supposed to be the very flower of his command. The enemy

approached. Eight or ten millions of the public property were exposed to be lost, unless preserved by the gallantry and indomitable valor of the few soldiers left behind to guard it. Almost with electric speed it becomes known at the city of Mexico, and an army such as she had never before marched into the field, was organized, amounting to some twenty or twenty-five thousand troops, and led on by their greatest chief.

Mr. President, much as his previous successes had satisfied every American that Taylor, and the officers and men under his command, were competent to accomplish almost any triumph that human power could accomplish, was there one who did not then tremble for their fate? And the fact that they were not utterly annihilated, may be considered almost a military miracle. Disparity of force was comparatively nothing before the energies of the American soldiers; and in the annals of former military triumphs, the proudest of them all will hereafter be regarded as nothing in comparison with the victories of Buena Vista. They are all thrown in the shade by the brilliant light of an exploit, which, whilst it electrified the American heart, astounded the world.

Let us look now, sir, to the campaign of last year. Gen. Scott was compelled to assail the city of Vera Cruz with between 12,000 and 14,000 troops, and to carry, at all hazards, a castle supposed to be impregnable. He succeeded in accomplishing it, but he has done little or nothing beyond that. Every battle which was fought between Vera Cruz and the city of Mexico, was fought with a disparity of numbers actually appalling. That noble leader was forced to march a distance of 150 or 200 miles, (I forget the exact distance,) into the enemy's country, and, for a great portion of the way through a dense population, to assail a city containing 180,000 or 200,000 inhabitants, surrounded by fortifications, which were supposed to be impregnable, and without even the means of keeping up his communications with the seaboard, for the purpose of getting supplies. These supplies found their way to him, from time to time, by the gallantry of the escort, who were obliged to fight, foot by foot, almost every mile of their progress. And at the end of all his great and extraordinary triumphs, Scott finds himself in the city of Mexico with only some 6,000 soldiers. Now, sir, who does not believe that, if he had started with an army of 30,000 men, although we might then have been deprived of the glory of his many victories, we might have been in possession of the city of Mexico, perhaps, without shedding a drop of blood, American or Mexican. Who can doubt that it is the duty of an Executive, managing a war declared to exist by a Christian people, to do what the honorable Senator from Mississippi, (Mr. DAVIS,) said it would be the effect of this bill to accomplish—not to ensure a triumph on the battle-field, but to avoid a battle by accomplishing success by force of numbers—to break down the moral power of the enemy—to conquer a peace by demonstrating to that enemy that resistance is in vain. All at once (I find no fault with it, on the contrary, I rejoice at it,) the eyes of the Executive have been opened. All at once it seems to be perceived by him, that the war heretofore has not been vigorously prosecuted, except on paper. Well, whose fault is it, Mr. President? Who would have borne the dread responsibility, if our gallant little army on the Rio Grande had been sacrificed? Who would have had the equally tremendous responsibility, if those gallant spirits now in the halls of the Montezumas had been sacrificed? The nations of the world would have said, with one accord, the Executive of the United States. Upon him the responsibility for the useless and cruel expenditure of blood and of treasure would have rested. Sir, I make bold to say, in speaking in the presence of those who know infinitely more upon such subjects than I do, that if the President had called out the 50,000 volunteers after hearing of the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma, there never would have been another blow struck in Mexico; and peace would long since have been restored. The Mexicans, to be sure, have a high and indomitable spirit, (I speak particularly of that portion of them who have in their veins the true Castilian blood,) but they know there may be a point at which resistance ceases to be a virtue, and they would have seen that that was their condition when they saw a determination on the part of the United States to exert their whole power in the accomplishment of the purpose for which war had been declared.

Who can doubt that if the Executive of the United States had announced that the purpose of the war was merely to procure indemnity for wrongs, and to vindicate outraged character, and to maintain the honor of our flag, and had placed fifty thousand troops in Mexico, as he might have done, it would have led to a cessation of hostilities. Sir, I think we have no peace, because the President of the United States has not exerted the power which Congress has placed in his hands, and which was intended to be exerted. I think, and I therefore charge upon him, that the American blood which has been so freely poured out, has been thus freely poured out because of his error. I think, and I therefore charge upon him, that the millions of money which have been spent, and have yet to be spent, have been and are to be spent because of his error. This is all that I propose to say, Mr. President, on the manner in which this war has been conducted.

And this leads me to consider very briefly what should be, in my judgment, the mode of its further prosecution. There are only three modes to be resorted to. The first is, to withdraw the troops altogether—if not to the Nueces, to this side of the Rio Grande. The second, to withdraw them to what is termed a defensive line; and, the third, to carry on the war in the heart of the Mexican territory, until Mexico agree to terms of peace. I prefer the last.

Mr. President, in saying that I prefer the last, I do not wish to be misunderstood. I prefer the last if the end to be obtained is not one which, in my judgment, would tarnish the American name. I prefer the last, if the object to be accomplished is merely the vindication of our violated honor, and indemnity for our heretofore violated rights. But if the purpose of this war, with the President of the United States, is to annihilate the nationality of Mexico, if it is the forcible dismemberment of her territory, then I say, on my responsibility as a Senator and a man, I would not give him a dollar.

Sir, we live at a time when character is of immense value with nations, as we know it to be with individuals; and if there be any one thing which more than another stains national character, it is using national power to inflict national injustice. And if there be any national crime, more crying and enormous, in the opinion of all Christendom, than any other, it is the forcible dismemberment of the territory of a weaker nation.

When I say, Mr. President, that I am for fighting the war out, I mean that I am for fighting it out in order to accomplish the purpose which we seek to have accomplished; that is, to have American rights recognised, and American honor vindicated; so as to furnish full and complete security against any subsequent violation.

The two first points to which I have referred, the proposition for withdrawing the troops, and that for taking a defensive line, I have already said, I cannot concur in. To withdraw the troops altogether, in my judgment, would be national dishonor, and I cannot, therefore, entertain the idea for a moment. To take a defensive line, would not, in my judgment, lead to peace, but would, on the contrary, be perpetual war; and so far as expense is to be mentioned in any comparison with the other calamities of war, it would be attended with infinitely greater expense than that of fighting it out. Now, sir, the objection to carrying the war on, is the expenditure of money with which it will be necessarily attended, and the consequent derangement of the whole financial condition of the country. My impression is, from some examination which I have given the subject, and with an anxious desire to arrive at a satisfactory result, that the war may be carried on in Mexico, without the expenditure of a single American dollar, and of course without affecting the pecuniary condition of the American people, or the pecuniary condition of the Government itself.

The resources of the Mexican Government, Mr. President, even under all the disadvantageous circumstances under which that government has existed, are infinitely greater, it seems to me, than is generally supposed. The fact is, that until a comparatively recent period, indeed until a short time before the commencement of the war with ourselves, the expenditures of their government have been about \$21,000,000 annually. And it has been appropriated to these purposes. They have had an army of 30,000 men always on pay, costing the Government about \$10,000,000. They have had a civil list bill of about \$6,000,000, and interest to be paid on the public debt to the amount of \$5,000,000, making \$21,000,000. Their army has been punctually paid, their civil list punctually met, and the interest on the public debt, until, as I have said, a comparatively recent period, has been met with equal punctuality. From what resources, sir? The products of their mines, when they are in full operation; and for a series of years, when in such full operation, they have produced \$25,000,000 per year; they charge what is termed a transit duty on all the bullion that is drawn from the mines until it reaches the port of exportation. This transit duty is paid in the form of a permit, granted on the part of the government, to convey the bullion from town to town, the permit being renewed at each terminus, until it reaches the place of exportation, and when it gets there, it is subject to an export duty of one per cent. The average amount of these transport duties, until the bullion reaches the place of exportation; is about two and a half or three per cent. The gross amount of bullion drawn from the mines, as I have said, is about \$25,000,000. The Senate will easily perceive then, the amount derived from this source, with an average of two and a half or three per cent. as transit duty, and with a specific export duty of one per cent. upon the value of every pound of bullion exported. The next source of revenue and the amount that it raises, it is almost impossible to calculate; or rather to speak more correctly, the amount it would raise if peace was restored to Mexico, if that country was restored to quiet, and business operations were permitted to go on in their ordinary course. This source is the stamp tax. They charge what is termed a stamp tax on every description of contract transferring every description of property, of or exceeding the value of five hundred dollars. That is to say, every contract between

man and man relative to property worth five hundred dollars, is to be written upon stamp paper, for which the parties pay to the stamp officers, six dollars. But according to their laws, contracts of this description are left in the hands of a Notary, and are recorded among the official transactions of the Notary, making it necessary for the parties to the contract, if they desire to have in their possession evidence of the contract, to obtain official copies; and the result is, that each one of the parties almost invariably takes a copy of the contract. The copy is also written on stamped paper, and for the copies there is paid six dollars each.

There is another source, and that is a duty on the sale of everything that is sold. Nothing passes from hand to hand by way of sale that does not pay a specific duty, regulated by the amount of the value of the articles so passing. Now, I will not estimate the amount thus derived; it is sufficient for my purpose to state the fact as I understand the fact to be, that the amount of revenue received from these sources has been abundantly sufficient to enable the Government of Mexico to meet punctually its disbursements to the amount of \$21,000,000. This amount would support any army which we might put into the field; and this we would have a perfect right to appropriate. Not to seize and confiscate individual property, which is abhorrent to every sense of justice, which would be an act of barbarism—a dishonor to the age in which we live, and a stain upon our national character—but to appropriate the public revenue of the country, so as to enfeeble the power of their government, to reduce the military to the same standard as private citizens, and prove, by the fact that we are thoroughly able to enforce it, that the restoration of peace depends on their submission. Now, I believe as confidently as I can anything of which we have not certain knowledge, that by pursuing a course of this description, for the purpose of enforcing a termination of this war, we shall not only obtain money as much as is necessary for the support of our army, but no portion of it will come from the people of the United States.

I know, sir, the objection that may be raised as to the consequence that may result from taking possession of the whole country. I think I can see almost as clearly as does the honorable Senator from South Carolina, (Mr. CALHOUN,) the result of incorporating the whole of Mexico into this Union; and, if I believed that the object was the incorporation of the whole of Mexico into the Union by the further prosecution of the war, much as I should hang my head in mortification and shame for the honor of my country, I would willingly submit to the withdrawal of the troops, rather than prosecute the war an hour longer. But I do not believe that such is to be the result. I do not believe that the people of the United States would suffer an Executive officer to perpetrate such a wrong, if the Executive even had it in contemplation. I do not believe that they would ever themselves assist an Executive to accomplish such an object. I would have much less confidence in them than I have, if I thought it possible that the mere lust of rapine, the mere lust of territory, would lead them to dishonor the American name by blotting from existence a neighboring and feebler nation.

I am for prosecuting the war, sir, because I believe the consequence will be, to bring Mexico the earlier to her senses, and to prompt her cheerfully to accept terms of peace. And this brings me to say a word or two on what should be, in my opinion, the terms of such a peace.

Now, sir, I speak for myself, though I have no doubt that I speak the sense of most of the friends around me. My honorable friend from South Carolina, (Mr. CALHOUN,) the other day, in the speech which he did us and the country the honor to deliver, said he believed the people of the United States were irrevocably determined on taking indemnity for the wrongs which we have suffered from Mexico, in territory. I hope he is mistaken. I believe he is mistaken. I believe the people of the United States would be to-morrow contented by a treaty which would make the Rio Grande the boundary. I believe they would be contented with such a treaty, for the purpose of terminating the war, rather than that Mexico should be compelled by the force of our arms to dismember herself. Now, in expressing this hope and belief, and in expressing the opinion that the war might be honorably terminated by taking the Rio Grande as the boundary, I wish it not to be supposed that I am opposed to the acquisition of additional territory. I am against the acquisition of territory by force. I am not opposed to the acquisition of territory of itself, but for one consideration which weighs in my judgment, and which has had heretofore and still has a controlling operation. Mr. President, I fear, I greatly fear, the conflict to which such an acquisition would lead. The honorable Senator from New Hampshire (Mr. HALE) told the Senate the other day that the true origin of this war lay in the settled purpose on the part of the South to perpetuate and extend slavery. I am not alluding to this now with any design to try conclusions with the honorable Senator on the question of slavery. Sir, he will pardon me for telling him that that is a subject which no Southern man on this floor, when he can avoid it, desires to discuss. He will permit me to tell

him, (and I do it with all good feeling, and with all the respect in which I hold him as a Senator of the United States,) that it has been owing to the exciting discussions on this subject in the North, that slavery now exists in many of the Southern States. He will permit me to tell him, that I have no doubt, not the least, that it has been the course, and that of those whose sentiments he speaks, on this subject, which had one more than anything else towards its perpetuation.

The greatest practical advocates of slavery, sir, have been the Senator himself and his particular constituents. Sir, I have my opinion on this subject as deeply instilled as can have the Senator from New Hampshire. They were almost born with me; they have been confirmed by the experience of every day of my life. They have been strengthened by all subsequent reflection. I do not choose to express them on this floor unless the topic is pressed home. But whilst I have fixed and unalterable convictions as to the mere institution of slavery itself as a political or civil institution, I have another conviction as deeply and irrevocably fixed, and that is a conviction that the Southern States owe it to themselves, one and all of them, to stand on their own rights, to vindicate their own equality, and exclusively at their own time, and without the interference of others, to meddle in their own way, with this peculiar institution. Notwithstanding this, Mr. President, I cannot be blind to all the indications of the times. I cannot but say, that the opinions entertained in the North, however erroneous I may think they are, are still honestly entertained. I cannot but say, that the Senator from New Hampshire would be false to the implied promise which he has given to the State which sent him here, if he were not to make it a condition, in the acquisition of any additional territory, that slavery should be forever excluded from it. I cannot but perceive that that is a popular feeling, which is sweeping like a whirlwind at the North; but there is an equally determined and steady feeling at the South. If these feelings be further excited, there can be but one result; that is deadly conflict, or amicable separation. And when I look at either, Mr. President, my heart sickens at the reflection. Sons of a common ancestry, bound together by common ties, glorying in a common renown, looking in common to a still more glorious future, I cannot but feel my heart sink within me, even at the possibility of such a result. And it is because I believe it will follow, if the state of things to which I have alluded shall be brought into existence, and not because I am opposed merely to the acquisition of territory, that I gave my cordial support to the resolution offered upon that subject by the distinguished Senator from Georgia (Mr. BERRIEN,) at the last session.

Sir, I am not to be driven into a different course by being told that it would leave us a pecuniary loss. With me, Mr. President, loss of money is nothing to loss of character. With me the boundless wealth of the world would be as nothing, compared with what I should esteem the incalculable loss attending the destruction of our national character. But, sir, it is not true, that a peace accomplished on the terms to which I have referred, would leave us without indemnity. Sir, we have indemnity in the history of this war. It is to be found in the many glorious battle-fields which it has presented to an astonished world. It is to be found in the delight which electrified every American heart at the result of every conflict. It is to be found in the security which it furnishes against the disturbers of our peace hereafter. A few hundreds of millions, even if it should go to hundreds, that may be expended, will be forgotten even while spoken of—while the glory and renown which it has heaped upon the American character, will be remembered as long as time itself shall endure. I am not, therefore, to be told that peace on such terms would leave us losers, in the true, high, and moral sense of the term.

A word on another subject, and I cease to trouble the Senate. I have already indicated, Mr. President, my preference of a regular over a volunteer force. Now, sir, that preference is founded, (and I have but a word or two, in way of reason, to assign for it,) on the opinion which information in my possession has enabled me to form, that the expense of a regular force is much less, and their efficiency infinitely greater; above all, that the sacrifice of human life is less. Mr. Secretary Poinsett, in his letter of the 21st March, 1838, to the Honorable Mr. Speaker Polk, now President, speaking of the comparative expense of the two descriptions of forces, says that—

“The difference of expense between the employment of this description of troops, (meaning volunteers and militia,) and regulars, is *at least as four to one*, independently of the wastage attending their ignorance of every administrative branch of the service, the enormous expense of marching them to and from distant points, for short periods of service, and the great increase that will be made to the Pension List, under the provisions of the act of the 19th March, 1836.”

Now, sir, the Senate will find how inefficient this description of force is—I mean as compared with regular forces—by turning to Document 297, of the 2d Session, 25th Congress. They will there find, that volunteers and militia were called out in the years '32, '36, '37, and '38, to serve in the Florida War, in the Black-Hawk War, in the

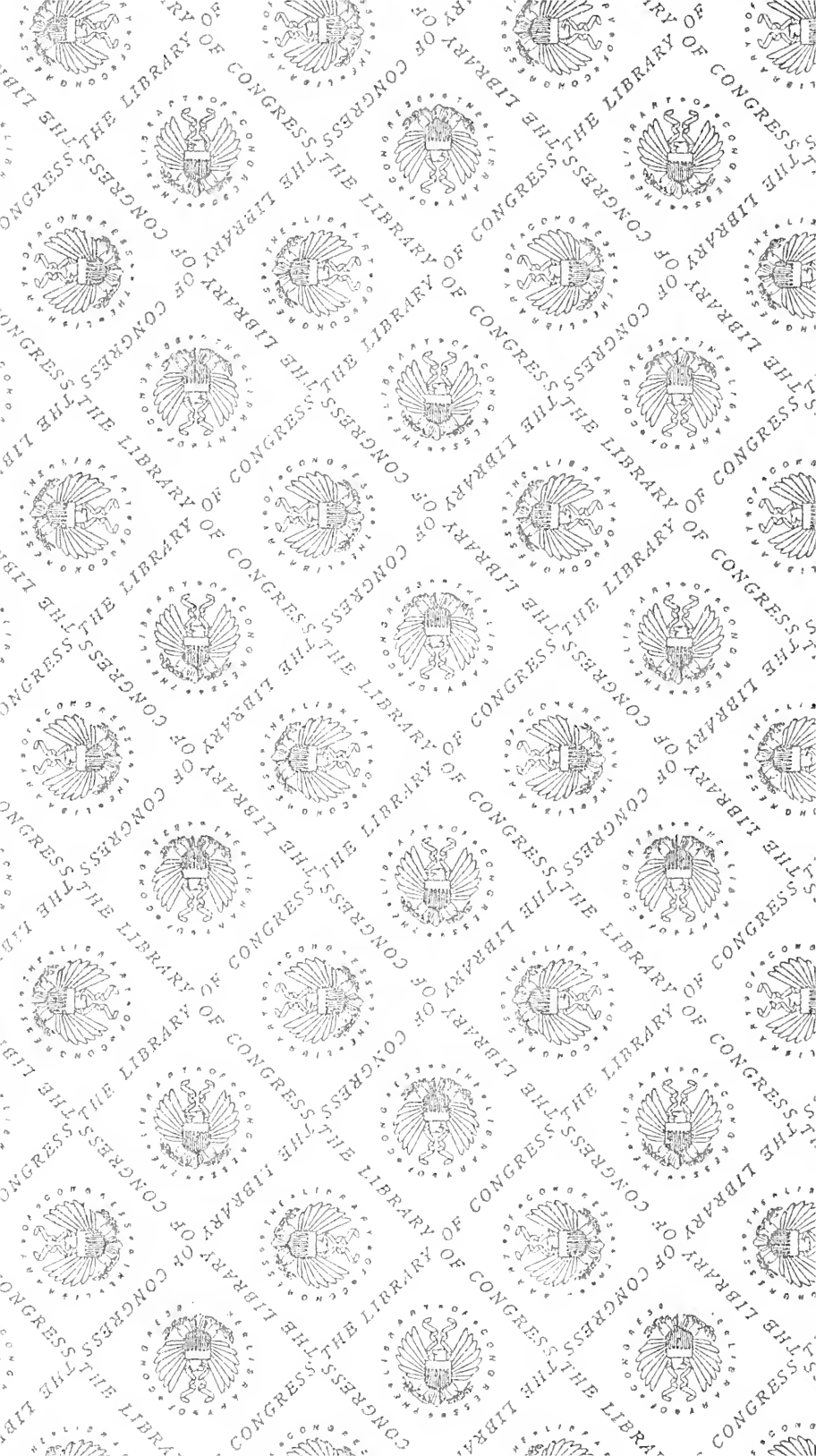
War against the Cherokees, and in the State of New York, at the time of the Border difficulties, to the number of 55,324. They will find, I am satisfied, that, aside from the additional expense attending the employment of these forces, and for the purpose now in view, (the superior efficiency of the regulars,) that the mortality among volunteers and militia, compared with regulars, is as ten to one. Sir, to what is this owing? It is owing principally to the fact that the officers are unable to subject them to the same state of discipline, and to prevent the exposure which leads to disease.

From the statements to be found among the papers from the War Department, it appears that the number of men enlisted for the line of the regular army, (the old establishment,) for the first five months of 1847, and from January 1st to January 1st, was 4,605, the number offering to be enlisted during the same period, and rejected by the recruiting officers, because of physical infirmity, was 8,475—more than twice the amount actually received. Now, I do not mean to underrate the volunteers. God forbid that I should! but I make bold to say, that at least one-half of those who were rejected as unfit for the regular service may be found in the ranks of the volunteers. The chances of mortality in that corps are of course very much increased.

I have said, Mr. President, all I intend to say upon this point; and I ask the attention of the Senate only a moment or two longer, while I add a word or two by way of conclusion. Sir, I have heard it said by some, that this war should be prosecuted because its tendency was to ameliorate the condition of Mexico. I have heard it said that we were constituted missionaries by Heaven, even by fire, and by sword, and by slaughter, to carry the light of civilization into that benighted land. I have heard that it has been stated, even in the pulpit, that we have been selected by Divine Providence to purify a dark and false religion—to break down their old, ancient, and degraded superstitions—to bring them into the pale of the true faith, and to substitute for it the holier and purer light of the Protestant religion. I have heard it stated, that the war is to be prosecuted to enlarge the “area of freedom.” I hold to no such doctrines. No, sir.

We need not, for the sake of enlarging the area of freedom, become propagandists. No physical force is on our part called for to break the bonds which bind other people in subjection. There is a silent, but potent moral power progressing through the world, rapidly tending to that consummation. It has its origin in the lesson which our example is teaching. Here is seen perfect personal and political freedom, combined with unexampled national happiness, prosperity, and power. Here is seen that individual equality which nature stamps upon the heart as a right, protected and enjoyed amongst ourselves to an extent never before known, and shielded by a national arm that the nations of the world would in vain attempt to strike down.

Yes, sir, our institutions are telling their own story by the blessings they impart to us, and indoctrinating the people every where with the principles of freedom upon which they are founded. Ancient prejudices are yielding to their mighty influence. Heretofore revered, and apparently permanent systems of government, are falling beneath it. Our glorious mother, free as she has ever comparatively been, is getting to be freer. It has blotted out the corruptions of her political franchise. It has broken her religious intolerance. It has greatly elevated the individual character of her subjects. It has immeasurably weakened the power of her nobles, and by weakening in one sense has vastly strengthened the authority of her crown, by forcing it to rest for all its power and glory upon the hearts of its people. To Ireland too—impulsive Ireland—the land of genius, of eloquence, and of valor, it is rapidly carrying the blessings of a restored freedom and happiness. In France, all of political liberty which belongs to her, is to be traced to it; and even now, it is to be seen cheering, animating, and guiding the classic land of Italy, making the very streets of Rome itself to ring with shouts of joy and gratitude for its presence. Sir, such a spirit suffers no inactivity, and needs no incentive. It admits of neither enlargement nor restraint. Upon its own elastic and never-tiring wing, it is now soaring over the civilized world, every where leaving its magic and abiding charm. I say, then, try not, seek not to aid it. Bring no physical force to succor it. Such an adjunct would serve only to corrupt and paralyze its efforts. Leave it to itself, and, sooner or later, man will be free. Sir, as to this war and its influence upon ourselves, there is much to rejoice at and be proud of. The struggle of '76 demonstrated the deeply-seated love of freedom in our sires, and their stern and indomitable purpose to enjoy it or die. The war of 1812, demonstrated the capacity of our institutions to bear such a trial, and nobly was the test borne and the capacity illustrated. The present war has again demonstrated, not only that such mere capacity continues, but that no nation exists endowed with greater military power. Mr. President, the result cannot but redound to our future peace and happiness. It furnishes ample indemnity for all the wrongs and obloquy we have heretofore suffered, and ample, ample security against their recurrence. Such a result has won for us national glory, and that is national power, stronger than thousands of fortresses, and as perpetual as, I hope in God, will be our nation's love of virtue and of freedom.





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